



OCTOBER 17, 1977

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(ZNS) THE HOUSE COMMERCE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN TOLD THAT MANY OF AMERICA'S LARGEST OIL COMPANIES HAVE BEEN USING FRAUDULENT MINING CLAIMS TO GAIN CONTROL OF POTENTIALLY-RICH URANIUM RESERVES IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES.

ONE WYOMING MINING CLAIMS EXPERT, JOHN MACGUIRE, TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT SPECULATORS REPRESENTING MAJOR PETROLEUM COMPANIES ROUTINELY FILED FALSE STATEMENTS ABOUT IMPROVING THEIR CLAIMS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OVER THE LANDS.

FEDERAL LAW REQUIRES THAT CLAIMANTS MUST INVEST AT LEAST \$100 (DOLLARS) IN IMPROVEMENTS FOR EACH CLAIM PER YEAR IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN MINERAL RIGHTS TO THE LAND.

MACGUIRE TESTIFIED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF CLAIMS -- MANY CONTROLLED BY MAJOR OIL COMPANIES -- IN WHICH NO IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR YEARS; HE SAID THAT FALSE STATEMENTS OF IMPROVEMENTS ARE SIMPLY FILED WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

IN A RELATED STORY, THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS REPORTED LAST WEEK THAT A NEW STUDY HAD FOUND THAT OIL COMPANIES NOW CONTROL 47 PERCENT OF AMERICA'S KNOWN URANIUM RESERVES. --ZODIAC

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(ZNS) CONVICTED ASSASSIN JAMES EARL RAY GOES ON TRIAL IN KNOXVILLE NEXT WEEK ON CHARGES STEMMING FROM HIS FIVE-DAY ESCAPE FROM A TENNESSEE PRISON LAST SUMMER.

RAY'S ATTORNEY MARK LANE SAYS THAT RAY WILL CHALLENGE THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM ON THE GROUNDS THAT HE WAS BEING "UNLAWFULLY CONFINED" AT THE TIME OF HIS ESCAPE. ACCORDING TO LANE, RAY WILL CONTEND THAT HE HAD A (QUOTE) "LEGAL RIGHT" TO ESCAPE FROM PRISON BECAUSE HE HAD NOT BEEN GRANTED A FAIR TRIAL IN 1960⁹ WHEN HE WAS ORIGINALLY CONVICTED OF KILLING DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JUNIOR.

ATTORNEY LANE SAYS THAT THE DEFENSE HOPES TO USE THE KNOXVILLE HEARING TO PUT IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE KING ASSASSINATION CASE ON TRIAL. LANE STATES THAT HE WILL INTRODUCE EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT FEDERAL OFFICIALS USED EVERYTHING, INCLUDING -- IN LANE'S WORDS -- "BLACKMAIL AND TORTURE," TO FORCE RAY TO PLEAD GUILTY IN 1969. LANE SAYS THIS WAS DONE IN ORDER TO KEEP THE TRUE FACTS OF THE KING ASSASSINATION FROM BEING MADE PUBLIC. --ZODIAC

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